

AF-7 - Protect Forestland by Reduced Conversion to Non-Forest Uses (Urban, Suburban, and Rural Lands)

Benefit/Cost of Reducing CO₂e:

Arizona: 3.7 MMt between 2007-2020; 0.2% of 2020 emissions; \$17/ton
New Mexico: 1.2 MMt between 2007-2020; 0.1% of 2020 emissions; \$22/ton
Colorado: 0.1-1.0 MMt or higher; \$5-50 or higher¹⁰

Assessment: High Priority. Bin B. 9 out of 22 votes.

The benefits here are similar to those for AF-6.

Healthy forests promote carbon sequestration and reduce carbon releases. This option has significant co-benefits such as wildlife habitat, recreational opportunities, water and air filtration, and reduced risk of fires. As the climate changes, it is anticipated that fires will become more severe, and will occur earlier in the year.

Utah should promote existing wildland-urban interface and conservation easement programs. Federal funding is available for these types of projects. In 2006, the State lost over \$1 million in funding from federal government; so there is concern about future funding. The Federal Forest Legacy program seems to prioritize Eastern states; the case should be made for more funding to western states. The LeRay McCallister Program could be expanded. Other sources include WUI protection program, and Quality Growth Fund (promoting existing WUI and Federal and State open lands protection/conservation easement programs).

¹⁰ Reductions depend on current rates of clearing; large amounts of carbon can be protected per acre.